

FAO: Mr L Gosden  
Southern Water Services Ltd  
Southern House  
Yeoman Road  
Worthing  
West Sussex  
BN13 3NX

10<sup>th</sup> February 2023

Dear Mr Gosden

### **SOUTHERN WATER DISCHARGES INTO LANGSTONE HARBOUR**

We are writing on behalf of our respective authorities regarding water quality in Langstone Harbour.


We welcome recent developments, such as the amendment to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill requiring water companies to upgrade wastewater treatment works, DEFRA's Storm Overflows Discharge Reduction Plan, and the inception of Southern Water's Clean Rivers and Seas Task Force. However, it is imperative that there is engagement opportunities with local stakeholders to deliver marked improvements effectively.

As an organisation, we recognise that our harbour users want peace of mind and assurance that contact with the water they enjoy is safe and will not cause them, or wildlife, any harm. Unfortunately, there is a plethora of evidence to the contrary. DEFRA's Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 highlights that pollution from wastewater is one of the top issues preventing our water bodies from returning to their near natural state. Langstone Harbour is internationally and nationally designated for its diverse habitats and species; good water quality is essential to help this astonishing ecosystem to thrive. The Harbour is also an important area for water borne recreation, with numerous sailing clubs, a marina, and a Watersports centre on its western shore.

We understand that fixing the issues surrounding storm overflows and treatment capacities are not without their difficulties and cannot be rectified without significant investment. The Harbour Board has a policy of engagement with harbour users, regulators, and operators and consider it a priority to engage at all levels to ensure that suitable progress is made. You know that Harbour staff, along with many other organisations, are working with Southern Water to reduce reliance on storm overflows and help deliver environmental improvements in the catchment.

While it is recognised that Langstone Harbour is not a designated bathing water, the level of exposure to harbour water experienced by many users closely matches that of bathers. However, in the interest of public safety, we believe that we should be taking this further by testing the harbour waters and offering assurance that the water is at a suitable safety standard. It has come to our attention that within Portsmouth City Council's environmental health team there is capacity to undertake water quality testing within Langstone Harbour if Southern Water would provide remuneration for costs incurred by the authority. It was by unanimous decision of the Board that we should write to you along with the Leaders of our Constituent Councils asking for this funding to enable water testing in Langstone Harbour.

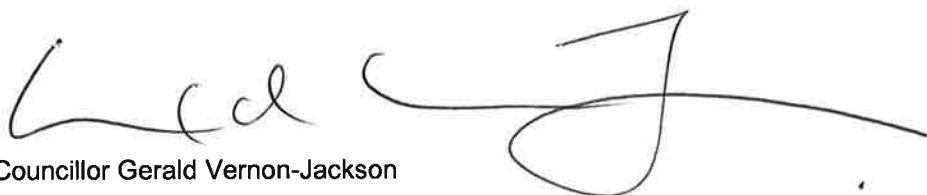
Yours sincerely



Councillor Lee Mason  
Chairman, Langstone Harbour Board



Councillor Alex Rennie  
Leader Havant Borough Council



Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson  
Leader Portsmouth City Council

CC;:

Alan Mak, MP for Havant

Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt, MP for Portsmouth North

Stephen Morgan, MP for Portsmouth South

Cllr Elizabeth Lloyd, Cabinet lead for Local plan. Environment and Water Quality, Havant BC

Cllr Kimberly Barrett, Cabinet lead for Climate Change and Environment, Portsmouth CC

Megan Roberts, Environment Officer, Langstone Harbour Board